

PROPOSED METROPOLITAN CLUB-HOUSES AND DORMITORIES FOR THE USE OF THE POOR.

Mr. D. O. Edwards, a respectable surgeon residing in Chelsea, one of the surgeons of the West London Institute for the gratuitous treatment of the diseases of the eyes, has published, in a letter addressed to L. T. Flood, Esq., deputy-lieutenant of the county of Middlesex, a plan for establishing a subscription hotel in the most suitable part of the metropolis, as an "improved method of insuring to the lower ranks of the people a due supply of food." Mr. Edwards appeals especially to the inhabitants of Chelsea, where he says he should like to see "the first seeds of the scheme sown." The mess-house is proposed to be capacious, suitable, and durable; to contain a suite of dining-rooms of ample dimensions, with the necessary offices and collateral apartments. A steward, contractor, or messman, who will undertake to supply a given number of rations daily at a given rate per head, to be appointed. Having carefully calculated the quantity and cost of the aliment necessary to maintain the human frame at all ages in perfect health, Mr. Edwards says he is of opinion that a club or society of 300 boarders, consisting of six classes, viz. single males, single females, married couples, youths of both sexes from twelve to sixteen years of age, children from six to twelve, and infants from birth to six years old, may be fed at rates descending from 5s. to 1s. 6d. per week. In considering these tables, observes the author, it should be recollected, that where several persons mess together with varying appetites, the excess of one ration over appetite compensates the deficiency of another, and thus an average is attained. The total weekly cost of 300 diets of the kind and quality Mr. Edwards enumerates in his table, he estimates at 34l. 17s. 4d., whilst the subscriptions, according to his scale, will amount to 44l. 12s. 6d., leaving a balance in favour of the treasury of 9l. 15s. 2d., applicable to the payment of rent, steward's, and servants' wages. We purpose giving at a future opportunity some further extracts from this proposition.

DISCOVERY OF A ROMAN TEMPLE AND OTHER BUILDINGS NEAR WEYMOUTH.

At a late meeting of the Ashmolean Society, Dr. Buckland gave a detailed account of the remains of many Roman buildings discovered recently by Mr. Medhurst, near Weymouth. The neighbourhood abounds with vestiges of Roman occupation. The large military station and Roman walls, Roman camp, and amphitheatre, at Dorchester, contiguous to the gigantic British Triple Camp of Maiden Castle, are well known. The situation of Weymouth Bay and Weymouth Harbour, close to the sheltered road of the Isle of Portland (Vindelia), and the distance of Dorchester from any other port, must have rendered Weymouth a most convenient and necessary naval station during the residence of the Romans in Dorsetshire. The nearest rising grounds on the north-west and north-east of Weymouth are strewn with fragments of Roman buildings, tesserae, bricks, pottery, and tiles, and small Roman copper coins. A large handsome Roman pavement was laid open, and covered up again by King George III.; and Mr. Medhurst has recently discovered the foundations of several villas, of a Roman temple, and of a Roman road. Dr. Buckland supposes these villas to have been occupied by the families of Roman officers or civilians connected with their great military establishment at Dorchester. The most remarkable discoveries made by Mr. Medhurst in 1843, and visited in October last by Dr. Buckland and Mr. Conybeare, were the foundations of a temple on the summit of Jordan-hill, and of a villa, a quarter of a mile distant, in the meadow between this hill and the village of Preston.

The temple appears to have consisted of a cella 24 feet square, surrounded by a peristyle, the walls of which inclosed an area 110 feet square. In the earth which occupies this peristyle Mr. Medhurst found more than four sacks of bones, and many horns (chiefly of young bulls), also many Roman coins, fragments of Roman pottery, cement, &c. Near the centre of the south wall were the foundations of steps, indicating the ascent to the door

of entrance, and four feet in advance of this wall are the foundations of four small columns. A layer of cement, which probably supported a pavement that has been removed, occupies the interval between these pillars and the foundation of the south front wall. Within the temple, in the south corner, was a dry well 14 feet deep, that had been filled in a very curious and unexampled manner. It was daubed all round with a lining or pargeting of clay, in which were set edgewise (like Dutch tiles round a fireplace) a layer of old stone tiles, which, from their peg-holes, appear to have been used or prepared for use on roofs of houses; at the bottom of the well, on a substratum of clay, was a kind of cist formed by two oblong stones, and in this cist were two small Roman urns, a broad iron sword, 21 inches long, an iron spear-head, an iron knife and steel-yard, two long irons resembling tools used by turners, an iron crook, an iron handle of a bucket, &c., but no bones. Next above this cist was a stratum of thick stone tiles, like those which lined the well, and upon it a bed of ashes and charcoal; above these ashes was a double layer of stone tiles arranged in pairs, and between each pair was the skeleton of one bird, with one small Roman coin; above the upper tier of tiles was another tier of ashes. Similar beds of ashes alternating with double tiers of tiles (each pair of which inclosed the skeleton of one bird and one copper coin) were repeated sixteen times between the top and bottom of the well; and half-way down was a cist containing an iron sword and spear-head, and urns like those in the cist at the bottom of the well. The birds were the raven, crow, buzzard, and starling; there were also bones of a hare.

Dr. Buckland conjectures that this building may have been a Temple of Esculapius, which received the votive offerings of the Roman families and invalids who visited Weymouth for sea-bathing and for health, the bones of young bulls found in the peristyle being those of the victims offered in ordinary sacrifice, while the smaller birds, whose bones are found so remarkably arranged in the well, may have been the votive offerings presented by those who received their cure from sea-air and sea-bathing, and possibly from the mineral waters of Radpole and Nottingham, all in the salubrious vicinity of a temple which there is such professional reason for supposing to have been dedicated to Esculapius.—*Oxford Herald*.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS IN GREENWICH PARK.—Some months ago the Commissioners of Woods and Forests took it into their heads that a reservoir on the highest part of Greenwich-park would add much to the security of the Hospital in case of fire, to the beauty of the park, and the comfort of the inhabitants. The inhabitants, however, influenced as some people would say by local prejudices, took a very different view of the question; they looked upon the reservoir as likely to be a huge pond of water, filled with decayed leaves, and inclosed in unsightly walls of earth. The result was, that by dint of several public meetings, a good many speeches, and a quantity of ink spilt, the commissioners were induced to review their decision, the reservoir stopped, and the park was saved this degradation. Now a more formidable opponent has entered the field. Among the various schemes in existence are some for carrying a railway through the park from side to side, completely destroying its symmetry, and rendering it in a great measure useless as a place of relaxation for the labouring classes. It is unnecessary to say anything on the hardship of spoiling one of the few green spots allowed to remain near London, and it is to be hoped that this project will not be allowed to pass through Parliament without a few words of remonstrance from some patriotic member.—*Times*.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE HULL PIER.—We understand that Mr. Simpson, joiner, of this town, has prepared a model of the pier, with safety railings, so ingeniously contrived as to be lowered in portions at a moment's warning, for the accommodation of vessels. If all we hear of this clever device be true, the inventor will most heartily deserve the thanks of his townsmen. The model, we learn, is to be submitted to some of the influential gentlemen of Hull during the week, and we shall in all probability call attention to it again in our next publication.—*Hull Packet*.

Correspondence.

NEW CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS, WINCHESTER.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION.

To the Editor of "The Builder."

SIR,—I inclose you a letter which it has been deemed necessary to address to the editor of the *Hampshire Advertiser*. It is in reply to one of your correspondents, whose letter (conveying serious charges against the Committee for Rebuilding the Church of St. Thomas in this city) had been transferred into the columns of that paper.

I presume that your sense of justice will induce you to lay before your readers this refutation of the charges which you were the means of promulgating.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

ONE OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE.

Winchester, November 18, 1844.

"THE NEW CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS, WINCHESTER."

To the Editor of the *Hampshire Advertiser*.

SIR,—The insertion in your paper last week of a letter which had previously appeared in *THE BUILDER*, reflecting on the Committee appointed to rebuild the Church of St. Thomas in this city, is calculated to do injury to the good cause in which they are engaged.

So long as the reflections on their conduct were confined to the pages of a publication but little known or read by those who are interested in our local affairs, they might safely be left unnoticed; but since you have afforded them the extensive circulation which your paper enjoys, it becomes necessary to check the mischief which they are calculated to produce. I beg, therefore, as no meeting of the committee has since been held, to give, on my individual responsibility, the fullest contradiction to certain allegations contained in the aforesaid letter.

It is not true that the architect whose plan has been selected by the committee now shrinks from confirming what he led them at first to believe respecting the probable expense of carrying out his design.

It is also untrue that he was allowed to carry away his drawings, to reduce the design within the sum originally stipulated, which would have justly laid the committee open to a charge of unfairness towards his competitors. He was, indeed, requested to furnish them with some additional drawings, to illustrate certain suggested alterations in the plan, and to make estimates of the expense of carrying out such alterations. In that, surely, there was nothing which could be justly complained of, since it is quite certain that not one of the designs presented to the committee would have been approved of by them without alteration.

The fact is, that the committee have given offence to certain persons interested in the success of particular architects, whose plans have not been adopted. In a competition invited by public advertisement, they have selected, purely on account of its merits, the design of a person previously altogether unknown to them, and in favour of whom no impure motive can possibly be imputed to them. For doing so, they will doubtless receive no condemnation from an unbiassed public, which, it is trusted, will not be deterred by such groundless assertions as those of *THE BUILDER*'s correspondent, from aiding them in the accomplishment of their pious purpose.

I ask you, in justice, to give insertion to this, and I furnish you with my name, in order that you may be satisfied I am truly

"ONE OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE."

Winchester, November 14th, 1844.

[We think enough correspondence relative to this paltry church-business has been already inserted in *THE BUILDER*. The meanness of the premium, the unjust lure to unemployed young men to make away with a portion of their property or that of their friends in an almost causeless journey, the incompetence of the tribunal,—all remain. The whole system is a pest to society, and causes the waste of money, sets unchristianly at loggerheads the whole body of subscribers, committee, friends, and professionals, local and foreign; and almost invariably insures the production of architecture unsound in taste and construction. Such competitions violate peace, piety, purity, and prudence, and bring to their victims pain, poverty, and privation.—*Ed.*]

SIR,—Much has lately been written in your paper against architectural competition; it is but fair that some few words should be said in favour of it.

When conducted in a fair and honourable manner, I consider that much good would arise